

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2670

C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 3837

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, VE

SUBJECT: VENAMCHAM INVITES CTV TO LOBBY IN U.S. TO CHANGE
TRADE LAW.

1. IN A SPEECH TO THE VENEZUELAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (VENAMCHAM) JOSE VARGAS, PRESIDENT OF THE CONFEDERATION OF VENEZUELAN WORKERS (CTV), REITERATED THE CTV'S OPPOSITION TO VENEZUELAN EXCLUSION FROM THE GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCE (GSP) OF THE TRADE LAW OF 1974. HE APPLAUDED THE VENAMCHAM LOBBYING EFFORT ON BEHALF OF VENEZUELAN EXEMPTION FROM THE GSP EXCLUSION. VARGAS WENT ON TO ADD THAT THE AFL-CIO HAD APPARENTLY IGNORED A PROMISE MADE TO HIM AND OTHER CTV LEADERS AT THE 1975 AFL-CIO CONVENTION IN SAN FRANCISCO NOT TO OPPOSE AN AMENDMENT FAVORABLE TO VENEZUELA. VARGAS SAID THAT THE AFL-CIO HAS RECENTLY TESTIFIED AGAINST ANY CHANGE IN THE TRADE LAW. VARGAS ATTRIBUTED THIS APPARENT TURN AROUND TO A FAILURE OF COMMUNICATIONS WITHIN THE AFL-CIO AND PROMISED THAT THE CTV WOULD TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION.

2. AFTER THE SPEECH VARGAS TOLD THE LABATT THAT HIS SOURCE OF INFORMATION ON THE AFL-CIO TURNAROUND WAS THE VENAMCHAM AND THAT THE CHAMBER HAD PROPOSED THAT A JOINT MISSION OF THREE CHAMBER MEMBERS AND THREE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CTV TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON TO LOBBY FOR VENEZUELAN ACCESS TO GSP. THE CTV DELEGATION WOULD BE SPECIFICALLY CHARGED WITH TALKING
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WITH PRESIDENT GEORGE MEANY, SECRETARY-TREASURER LANE KIRKLAND,

AND OTHER HIGH OFFICIALS OF THE AFL-CIO TO REMIND THEM OF THE COMMITMENT WHICH THE VENEZUELANS FEEL THEY RECEIVED IN SAN FRANCISCO AND HAVE THE AFL-CIO REMOVE ITS REPORTED OPPOSITION TO AN AMENDMENT TO THE TRADE LAW WHICH WOULD GIVE VENEZUELA (AND ECUADOR) ACCESS TO GSP.

3. COMMENT: GSP REMAINS A VERY SORE POINT IN VENEZUELA. THE CTV IS GIVING THE AFL-CIO THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT ON THIS ISSUE BUT VARGAS MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE WOULD BE DIS-APPOINTED IF THE PROPOSED VISIT TO THE U.S. FAILS TO PRODUCE A RE-AFFIRMATION OF THE COMMITMENT THE CTV THOUGHT IT GOT IN SAN FRANCISCO.
SHLAUDEMAM

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